

Reasons for Allowance

Claims 1, 12, and 14 are allowed. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The prior art does not teach or suggest, **"wherein the charger comprises a charging/discharging unit which charges and discharges each of said plurality of cells individually through said pair of second electrodes, and wherein said switch changes from the closed state to the open state when said switch is pressed by a projection placed on an attaching portion of either the battery or the charger and the battery is attached to the charger, and said switch changes from the open state to the closed state when the battery is detached from the charger"** as recited in claim 1. Claim 12 depends from claim 1 and is allowable for the same reasons.

The prior art does not teach or suggest, **"wherein said charger comprises a charging/discharging unit which charges and discharges each of the plurality of cells individually through said pair of second electrodes, and wherein an attaching portion of either said battery or said charger comprises a projection which makes said switch change to the open state from the closed state when said battery is attached to said charger, and said switch changes from the open state to the closed state when said battery is detached from said charger"** as recited in claim 14.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably

Art Unit: 2858

accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to RICHARD V. MURALIDAR whose telephone number is (571)272-8933. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:00-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Patrick J. Assouad can be reached on 571-272-2210. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Richard V Muralidar/
Examiner, Art Unit 2858

/Edward Tso/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2858